

Message Text

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APPROVED BY ARA:WDROGERS

S/S:O P. JOHNSON

S: MR. COVEY

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMCONSUL BELIZE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 243265

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GT, BH

SUBJECT: MEETING BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND AMB. ASENSIO

1. SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR ASENSIO CALLED ON SECRETARY KISSINGER ON OCTOBER 9, ON THE INSTRUCTION OF HIS GOVERNMENT, TO DELIVER A NOTE ARGUING THE GUATEMALAN CASE ON BELIZE AND ASKING FOR U.S. SUPPORT IN THE UNGA; TO ASK THE SECRETARY TO ADVISE THE BRITISH THAT GUATEMALA WOULD BE WILLING TO ACCEPT LESS THAN THE WHOLE TERRITORY OF BELIZE IN A SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT WITH THE BRITISH; AND TO TOUCH ON A SLIGHT DETERIORATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S.G. AND THE GOG. THE SECRETARY AGREED TO MENTION THE GUATEMALAN SETTLEMENT OFFER TO UK FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN WHEN HE NEXT SEES HIM AND
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ASSURED AMBASSADOR ASENSIO OF OUR CONTINUED CORDIAL FEELINGS

TOWARDS GUATEMALA. END SUMMARY.

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2. AMBASSADOR ASENSIO CALLED ON THE SECRETARY ON OCTOBER 9 ON THE INSTRUCTION OF HIS GOVERNMENT. HE DELIVERED TO THE SECRETARY A NOTE SETTING OUT THE LEGAL AND HISTORICAL BASIS FOR GUATEMALA'S CLAIM TO BELIZE. (NOTE CONTAINS NOTHING NEW ON THESE POINTS.) NOTE STATES THAT NEGOTIATIONS WITH UK HAVE NOT BEEN INTERRUPTED AND EXPRESSES HOPE THAT THEY MAY CONTINUE IN VERY NEAR FUTURE. NOTE REQUESTS U.S.G. SUPPORT,

SHOULD THE BELIZE MATTER BE RAISED IN THE UNGA, TO THE END THAT "IT BE RECOMMENDED" THAT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE PARTIES CONTINUE IN A PEACEFUL AND HARMONIOUS MANNER AND ALSO REQUESTS THAT USUN BE INSTRUCTED TO VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE GUATEMALAN POSITION.

3. ASENSIO, AFTER BRIEFLY SUMMARIZING GOG HISTORICAL AND LEGAL BASIS FOR BELIZE CLAIM STATED THAT, WHILE PUBLICLY GOG CLAIMED ALL OF BELIZE, THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO SETTLE FOR LESS. HE REFERRED TO A SMALL, INDISTINCT MAP OF BELIZE; BUT AT ONE POINT, HE INDICATED THE SIBUN RIVER AS A POSSIBLE DIVIDING LINE. HE STATED THE GOG WAS NOT ASKING FOR THE INTERVENTION OF THE SECRETARY AS A FORMAL ARBITRATOR OR MEDIATOR BUT DID REQUEST THE SECRETARY TO PASS TO THE BRITISH THE GOG WILLINGNESS TO SETTLE FOR LESS THAN THE WHOLE OF BELIZE. THE SECRETARY AGREED TO PASS THIS TO FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN WHEN NEXT HE SEES HIM IN A FEW WEEKS.

4. ASENSIO SAID GUATEMALA COULD NOT ACCEPT A SETTLEMENT WHICH GAVE THEM NO TERRITORY IN BELIZE, SINCE THIS WOULD CUT GUATEMALA OFF FROM ACCESS TO THE ATLANTIC. HE STATED THAT BELIZE WAS PLANNING TO ANNOUNCE ITS INDEPENDENCE UNILATERALLY AND THAT THE GOG COULD NOT ACCEPT THIS; HE STATED THIS WOULD CAUSE THE GOVERNMENT TO FALL. RATHER THAN ALLOWING A UNILATERAL DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE TO STAND, ASENSIO SAID, THE GUATEMALANS WOULD FIGHT. HE STATED THEY WEREN'T AFRAID OF FIGHTING THE BRITISH BUT WERE AFRAID OF THE CUBANS. HE MADE MUCH OF CUBAN INITIATIVES, SINCE THE LIMA CONFERENCE, CONFIDENTIAL

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ON THE BELIZE QUESTION AND ALSO ON THE PUERTO RICAN ISSUE.

5. THE SECRETARY POINTED OUT THAT THE MORE CASTRO TALKED ABOUT PUERTO RICO THE BETTER FOR US, SINCE THIS MADE IT LESS LIKELY THAT WE WOULD HAVE TO DEAL WITH POLITICAL PRESSURE HERE FOR RECOGNITION OF CUBA. THE SECRETARY SAID THAT WE HAVE NO PARTICULAR REASON TO

WANT RELATIONS WITH CUBA.

6. ASENSIO ALSO MADE A BRIEF REFERENCE TO A SLIGHT
DETERIORATION IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S.G. AND THE
GOG WHICH HE VAGUELY ATTRIBUTED TO LOWER LEVELS IN THE
DEPARTMENT. AS EVIDENCE HE CITED THE RECENT REFUSAL TO
ALLOW THE TRANSFER OF TWO FLAMETHROWERS, WHICH HAD BEEN
REQUESTED AS PART OF A QUANTITY OF TRAINING SUPPLIES
AND AMMUNITION REQUESTED BY THE GOG. (THE REST OF THE
LIST WAS APPROVED BY NOTE OF OCTOBER 6). THE SECRETARY

ASSURED ASENSIO OF OUR CONTINUED CORDIAL FEELINGS
TOWARDS GUATEMALA.

7. MEMCON AND COPY OF NOTE BEING POUCHED. KISSINGER

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